

PREPARATION OF TEXTURE MODIFIED FOOD

Good hygienic practice is essential during the preparation of texture modified and pureed foods as the extra handling increases the potential for cross contamination.

Texture modified meals

Texture modified meals are provided for residents or patients that have difficulty chewing and swallowing.

Texture modified foods may be thickened, minced or pureed.

Due to the extra handling involved with the preparation of texture modified foods, there is an increased potential for cross contamination and cases of foodborne illness have been attributed to hygiene failure during this process.

Cleaning and sanitising equipment

Your food safety program should include a procedure or set of work instructions that outline the dismantling, cleaning and sanitising of equipment.

Equipment used to homogenise food usually requires complete disassembly to fully clean.

Contamination of blenders and mixers has been identified as a potential problem because they are difficult to clean.

Procedure for preparing texture modified foods

Your procedure should include the following steps to ensure that texture modified foods are produced safely:

- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and warm water and dry thoroughly – clean gloves may be used as an additional barrier.
- Texture modified foods should be prepared according to the directions for use of the thickening agent or recipe. In some cases a blender might be required to achieve an adequate mix.
- Any equipment such as blenders and stab mixers should be dismantled to enable thorough and effective cleaning and sanitising.

Where food is modified or pureed without cooking:

For food that is texture modified and not intended to be cooked (e.g. pureed fruit):

- Use equipment dedicated to uncooked ready-to-eat foods only

- Ensure all equipment is clean and sanitised prior to modifying/puréeing
- Ensure these foods are processed before other foods that need to be cooked
- Ensure the equipment is cleaned and sanitised in between uses.

Where food is modified or pureed before cooking:

For food that is texture modified prior to being cooked:

- Minimise the amount of time between texture modification and cooking (e.g. less than 1 hour)
- Thoroughly cook food to temperatures of at least 70°C for 2 minutes (or use an equivalent process)
- Ensure texture modified food remains above 60°C before serving.



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Where food is modified or puréed after cooking:

For food that is intended to be texture modified after cooking:

- Thoroughly cook food to temperatures of at least 70°C for 2 minutes (or use an equivalent process).
- To limit the risk of contaminating foods that are thickened, puréed or cut up after cooking:
 - process food in an area away from raw meats and other non ready-to-eat foods on equipment dedicated to ready-to-eat foods only,
- Texture modify or purée food immediately after cooking
- Ensure food is cooled in compliance with Food Standards Code requirements (the '2-hour/4-hour cooling rule') such that the food is cooled:
 - within two hours—from 60°C to 21°C
 - within a further four hours—from 21°C to 5°C
 - then modified once cooled.
- Ensure all equipment has been dismantled, cleaned and sanitised before use.
- Minimise the amount of time it takes to texture modify the food before chilling (e.g. place in cool room as soon as possible).
- Minimise the amount of time texture modified food is stored between cooking and reheating:
 - Refrigeration should be limited to 48 hours at 5°C or below
 - Frozen food should be used within 48 hours of being thawed
- Foods should be reheated to 70°C for 2 minutes (or equivalent) prior to serving.
- Serve reheated food above 60°C

Texture modifying left-over food

Left-over food from the plating line may be texture modified providing it is refrigerated during plating or processed within 2 hours of food temperature entering the danger zone.

Reheating should allow for potential *Listeria monocytogenes* contamination (70°C for 2 minutes).

More information

- Visit www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au
- Phone the helpline on 1300 552 406
- Guidelines for food service to vulnerable persons available at www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/industry/industry-sector-requirements/vulnerable-persons

About the NSW Food Authority: The NSW Food Authority is the government organisation that helps ensure NSW food is safe and correctly labelled. It works with consumers, industry and other government organisations to minimise food poisoning by providing information about and regulating the safe production, storage, transport, promotion and preparation of food.

Note: This information is a general summary and cannot cover all situations. Food businesses are required to comply with all of the provisions of the Food Standards Code and the *Food Act 2003* (NSW).



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More resources at foodauthority.nsw.gov.au



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